for Population Sciences, Mumbai as the nodal agency. Reports for all India and most of the States have been brought out, which provide demographic and health information. The results reveal that for many of the indicators, there have been improvements as compared to a similar survey in 1992-93. There is still scope for improvement even in the developed States, including Maharashtra.

(c) Results of the National Family Health Survey have been disseminated to States to take necessary measures, in required areas. Government of India has taken a number of major steps for improvement of Family Welfare Programme which include:

(i) An integrated and holistic programme for Reproductive and Child Health that includes Maternal Health, Child Health and Contraception. Some of the Important interventions are Essential Obstetric Care. Emergency Obstetric Care, 24 hours Delivery Services at Primary Health Centres and Community Health Centres, Dai Training, RCH Camps and New born care, etc.

(ii) Government has adopted a National Population Policy (NPP) in February 2000, which provides for an inter-sectoral agenda to bring about population stabilization. Community involvement in administering family planning services is undertaken.

Effect of BT cultivation on public health

†3508. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the public health is likely to be affected by the cultivation of BT cotton in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government have conducted any assessment of the health hazards likely to take place as a result of the production of the said product;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) There is no evidence to date to indicate that public health will be affected by the cultivation of approved variety of BT Cotton.

(b) to (d) For evaluating the food safety considerations—the Maharashtra Hybrid Seed Company conducted allergenicity and toxicological studies on

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

goats and rats which did not reveal any adverse effects attributable to BT. Cotton. Feeding experiments conducted with BT Cotton seed meal on fish, chicken, cows and buffaloes indicated that the BT Cotton seed meal is nutritionally equivalent to and as wholesome and safe as, the non-BT Cotton seed meal. As per the opinion of the National Institute of Nutrition a Research Institute under the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) the refined cotton seed oil consumed by humans is unlikely to carry an transgenic material derived from BT cotton.

Stoppage of supply of medicines by chemists

3509. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI N. R. DASARI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the approved chemists had stopped supplying medicines to CGHS dispensaries recently putting CGHS beneficiaries into difficulties in getting medicines; and

(b) if so, the reasons for stopping supply and the steps taken to solve the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Authorised Local Chemists of CGHS Delhi had gone on strike during 1.4.2002 to 12.4.2002. The strike was restricted to Delhi only. The chemists were protesting against withholding of 10% of their bills submitted to the CGHS. This amount is being withheld in view of the matter relating to charging of sales tax by the chemists. These matters are now under reference to the C&AG.

During the strike period, to avoid any difficulties to the CGHS beneficiaries, they were allowed to purchase medicines from the open market and get reimbursement from the respective offices in the case of serving employees and from the CGHS in the case of pensioner beneficiaries.

Rates in hospitals approved by CGHS

3510. SHRI N. R. DASARI:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some of the hospitals recognized/approved by